

Application No. 09/893,359
Amendment Dated: July 31, 2007
Response to Office Action of January 31, 2007
Attorney Docket No.: B051

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended) A method of enhancing the quality and efficiency of the clinician-patient encounter, the method dependent upon differentiation of two types of data resulting from the clinician-patient encounter, the method comprising:
 - obtaining descriptive data to enable a clinician to determine a diagnosis;
 - determining a diagnosis;
 - entering the diagnosis into an electronic system wherein entry of the descriptive data in an electronic format is not a prerequisite for entering a diagnosis;
 - automatically determining a proposed plan of action consistent with the diagnosis, the proposed plan of action including one or more elements;
 - electronically displaying the proposed plan of action composed of functional data;
 - if the proposed plan of action is acceptable to the clinician, accepting the plan of action;
 - and
 - if the proposed plan of action is not acceptable to the clinician, altering or adding to the one or more elements until in order to make them acceptable for the care of a specific patient,
 - wherein the method differentiates between descriptive data and functional data, the descriptive data regarding the patients history, symptoms and physical examination findings being used by the clinician to form the diagnosis, but only function data being required to be entered into the electronic system to determine a plan of action.
2. (original) The method of claim 1 further comprising automatically initiating one or more of the action plan elements.
3. (original) The method of claim 1 in which entering the diagnosis into the electronic system includes:
 - entering a colloquial diagnosis into the electronic system;

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determining from the colloquial diagnosis a formal diagnosis; and
associating the formal diagnosis with said colloquial diagnosis for further use.

4. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein selecting one or more elements of the plan of action in which altering or adding to the one or more elements until in order to make them acceptable for the care of a specific patient includes:

automatically determining whether each the altered or added action plan element is authorized for the entered diagnosis by a payor or other authority; and

if the care plan element is not authorized by the payor for the entered diagnosis, automatically suggesting one or more alternative diagnoses for which the care plan element is authorized, thereby allowing a clinician to converge between a diagnosis and plan of action.

5. (original) A system enhancing the quality and efficiency of the clinician-patient encounter, comprising:

an output device for displaying to a clinician, health-related information, including diagnostic and care plan information;

an input device for entering diagnostic and care plan information;

a memory for storing a computer program;

a processor for executing the computer program, the computer program enhancing the quality and efficiency the clinician-patient encounter by:

accepting from the clinician a diagnosis entered through the input device;

automatically displaying care plan elements consistent with the diagnosis, the care plan elements being arranged in a specific order designated by the clinician and/or an authority;

accepting from the clinician a selection of one or more alternate or additional care plan elements; and

following review and acceptance by the clinician and/or authoritative electronic systems, automatically initiating at least one aspect of the selected care plan elements.

6. (original) The system of claim 5 in which care plan elements are displayed in an order determined by the frequency of previous selections by the clinician, an order predefined by the clinician, or an order in accordance with a selected medical authority.

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7. (original) The system of claim 5 in which the program adaptively modifies the order of care plan options to reflect choices made by the clinician.
8. (original) The system of claim 5 in which accepting from the clinician a selection of one or more care plan elements includes accepting the selection of one or more of the displayed care plan elements.
9. (original) The system of claim 5 in which accepting from the clinician a selection of one or more care plan elements includes selecting a revised or additional care plan element or accepting a care plan element that is entered by the clinician and that is not one of the displayed care plan elements.
10. (original) The system of claim 9 in which the program further determines whether each entered care plan element is supported by a payor for the entered diagnosis and, if not, displays for selection by the clinician at least one alternative diagnosis for which the payor will support the care plan element(s).
11. (original) The system of claim 5 in which the input device and the output device are positioned on a handheld computer.
12. (original) The system of claim 11 in which the handheld computer includes a wireless communications link to a computer network.
13. (original) The system of claim 12 in which the handheld computer further includes a microphone for verbally inputting patient descriptive data, the verbally input data being transmitted over the wireless communications link to a computer network for transcription or storage.
14. (original) The system of claim 1 in which the transcribed verbally input data is downloaded to the handheld computing device for review by the clinician.
15. (original) The system of claim 5 in which the program supports one or more applications programming interfaces for communicating with other health-care related programs.
16. (original) The system of claim 5 in which the program communicates with databases accessible through a computer network, thereby permitting the program to recall information from the databases and display the information on the output device.

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17. (original) The system of claim 16 in which the database include a medical records database, a payor formulary database and other medical and patient information databases.

18. (original) The system of claim 16 in which the program automatically initiates at least one aspect of the selected care plan by communicating with healthcare service provider programs.

19. (original) The system of claim 18 in which the service provider program includes one or more pharmacy programs or medical laboratory programs.

20. (original) The system of claim 5 in which the program includes instructions for initiating a page for a clinician's assistant or coworker.

21. (original) The system of claim 16 in which the program causes the display to display patient-related health information upon request of the clinician.

22. (original) The system of claim 16 in which the program allows entry of vital sign or other measured patient data manually or via electronic interface into the system.

23. (original) The system of claim 16 in which the program causes the display to display the patient's vital signs upon request of the clinician.

24. (original) The system of claim 5 in which the display displays advertisements for products or services related to the patient care details as selected by the clinician.

25. (original) The system of claim 24 in which the advertisements are determined by the user's professional practice, specialty, location and/or personal interests.

26. (original) The system of claim 25 in which the advertisements are further determined in a context-based manner based on interaction of the clinician with the system.

Claims 27-44 (cancelled)